



## THE MERRY CHRISTMAS OF GIOVANNA

BY

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**M**OTHER of my thankful heart,—  
Yesterday was Thanksgiving and  
the Principal said in chapel for us  
to count our bennyfits up to God.  
That was easy like anything because when he  
gave you to me seems like he said "Giovanna,  
here is all your bennyfits in one package."

Our school turkey was big as a little ash barrel

and the dinner so many courses it was like a  
week of meals tied together.

I fell awake in the middle of Thankful Night  
and first believed me to be back in the sylum for  
the many girls in white nightys. But when I  
saw those nightys all embroidery and my shiny  
bed of brass and one girl to toast marshmallows  
on the steam heat I knew the difference and was

glad. Dolly my poor chum now rooms with me by both our wish. Dolly stood on her bed making her arms act like the priest's and whispered a speech most out loud to say she had been taken with an idea in her sleep very grand even noble.

The Eggsloosils laughed much and whispered "Here! here!" and sat on our beds and floors to listen and passed chockylet creams. Only one was sleepy and said pickle that idea but the rest put shame and pillows on her. I asked "Dolly, is it a new poem?" and she answered "no but better for a poem is just literature and this idea is all true item." I asked "What's item Dolly?" but she never explained. She made more speech but low for teachers wake easy. She said there is us pampered darlings of our doting parents and there's orfuns who are Miss Fortune's waives and poor things. Her grand idea was for the Eggsloosils to give the orfuns of the sylum a Christmas like they never dreamed could be in this world. The girls jumped themselves up and danced in their bear feet for glad of my chum's noble idea and I never loved Eggsloosils quite so hard as that minute.

Dolly put me in her speech to name me cyclope of orfun lore who must understand their habits and for me to all times speak up.

One girl said the orfun could use her tree the next day after the day after Christmas. I said did they truly want the cyclope of orfun lore to speak up? They answered "Yes, lay on mack duff." I shook some in my bed but lay on like they said and explained how orfuns must be ever grateful for trees but all years to have Christmas not on the hollyday but after other persons have finished tastes like cold potatoes to their soul.

The girls said this must be no cold potato Christmas. They decided to beg their parents to celebrate their presents at home Christmas Eve and to let them eat early Christmas Day so as to fetch the orfuns to the school before dark and all so promised except one girl that lives far off in the geography.

Another girl said "Let's give the orfuns turkey dinner before the tree," but some complained so many relayshune wait for presents they could not put that much allowance onto orfuns.

But an Eggsloosil named Bessie made to answer "Let's ask the Principal if we have no ~~dellets~~ on our dinners from now to Christmas perhaps she will give us turkey dinner for the orfuns."

The girl of sleepy replied "That is easy now to say when we have just finished minis pie and plum pudding and cake and ice cream and raisins and nuts all in one Thankful dinner but a month of no deserts would be terrible and

must reduce us all to skinnybone." The other Eggsloosils made laughs on her and more pillows and said no deserts was allright with them for orfuns' sake.

Dolly poeted when she never knew she was going to.

"Dear cyclope of orfun lore,  
O want you please to tell us more!"

So I told how the presents of orfuns are most times the same for all. You look at your present and then 3 or 4 dozen orfuns hold the same in their hands and if you let go of it you can tell no more if it is really that one except yours was not broken and the one you now got is so.

The Eggsloosils had serious looks on them and said all gifts must be different. They sang to me Dolly's poetry.

"Dear cyclope of orfun lore,  
O want you please to tell us more!"

So I told that if not the same then orfun presents must be already busted pretties of richness. In my sylum Christmas one time I got a doll like I prayed by my bed very beautiful except she missed one foot and one hand and one eye and a crack in her cheek. I tried to think onto her all that was missed but I never could so I played instead how she had been whaled by a cruel father but was now a whole and adopt by me to love better for her misseds and whales.

Dolly hugged me and all promised no gifts must be busted and sang Dolly's poetry at me again to speak up more.

I answered "This next is too much for orfuns but O the ache } usin have in me for a present tied in tishoe paper with a red ribbon! I ached and ached and ached for that like a pain to take medicine with a spoon for cure."

All exclaimed tishoe paper with red ribbon must be wrapped round the gifts like for relayshun or anybody.

I said I must wear my orfun clothes for then not to see me that usin be orfun now in dress of richness. Dolly made her arms act like 6 priests for telling all to wear orfun dress same as me and look like whales. The Eggsloosils cried "O lets! lets! lets!" and the girl who lives far in the geography said she would write her family to let her stay and have cold potato Christmas at home after all had finished so she could wear a sylum dress.

But I said that is no fair because orfun want to stare at pretty clothes and not come here to see like their own selves in the lookingglass.

Dolly was taken with another idea so big it made her most crazy — that was to put the pretty clothes on the orfuns' backs to keep

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"DOLLY'S GRAND IDEA WAS FOR THE EGGBOMBS TO GIVE THE ORPHANS OF THE SYLEM A CHRISTMAS LIKE THEY NEVER DREAMED COULD BE IN THE WORLD."

She asked me how many orfuns and I answered I believed the orfuns to be about the same thickness of Eggsloosifs and she declared one girl must dress one orfun perhaps not new but good and pretty.

All got excited and forgot teachers and the Principal opened the door in a keemoo. Dolly disappeared under the blanket but her head was wrong way round to her feet on the pillow.

The Principal went to look haughty but her eyes laughed and the girls begged her in which she came and they told her all. She said we might make Christmas for orfuns and economize by no deserts for orfun turkey but now to bed and not catch our deathycolds which all so done very happy.

It is my turn to practice scales on the plaso so I will say goodbye, darling bennyot Mother of me.

Giovanna.

*Angel Christmas present Mother,—*

We have so much orfun business in this school we almost cannot do our practice and lessons. The girls all secured easy the dresses but now have much trouble to find the right orfun which fits in the dress. All Saturdays go committys of Eggsloosifs to the sylum for measuring orfuns but just with their guess not to spoil the surprise.

Dolly begged her dress off an Aunt with a little girl cousin. It is navy blue silk decorated with ruffles so her orfun must be 7 like the dress. She picked out a whole named Lizzie to fit it fine so that is not her grief and woe but it comes of asking Lizzie what she wants for presents and Lizzie begged "O please a Mama and a Papa." Dolly has that kind of heart to promise first and then wonder if she can so now she's got to anyway and it puts her most crazy. If Lizzie could just be the pretty kind—but her complexion is pale trimmed with freckles and her teeth are some gone and not grown in yet. Her hair is red pigtales. Her nose skwints up a little but not enough to notice much and she has a good blue eye and a feckshunate dishpishin. Dolly names her hair tisshen but the Eggsloosifs hugh and say no, plain cornic. They all times advise Dolly to raffd her off at the tree with tickets but my noble cham will ever answer "Heethes creatures! raffd off your own orfuns if you want to but my Lizzie never do I raffd! I will find her sootybell parents or adopt her myself."

It's a tight secret only Dolly lets me tell just you she's got the parents of Lizzie all picked but they don't know it yet and Dolly has awful scars to imagine how they will act when the news gets broke on them. It is an Aunt and Uncle not the one she begged the dress off of but another named Winayfred and John with no

child and rich like anything. Dolly makes little ticks on their hearts like to say "What is home without an orfun?" But her Uncle will ever answer "When orfun comes in at the door place flies out of the window" which is a mistake for Lizzie is not the kind to break the window like Dolly's Uncle thinks.

This does not discourage my poet (hum. She has a skeem to fix all Christmas night at the tree. The Eggsloosifs will invite their relay-shuns and the halves their whichever they got lefts and the maytron will company the wholes. Dolly says anybody must give thanks for presents and never look like it is not the best thing they want in the big world so she will give Lizzie to her Aunt and Uncle for a present and them to Lizzie for a present and all live happy ever after and three off her list. I tell Dolly a present can be no fair like a lady in our tennymint O awful poor and a daygo organist made a present to her little boy of a sick monkey that must all days eat cream and bannannas. Dolly says the cases are different but she will ask the Principal so I may be satisfied.

Mother I had to choose the orfun of big mouth and little sense because nobody else could like her looks and ways but I know what looks you have to be that kind no person wants. She is most my size and will fit in my plain brown rainy dress or my red silk. The Principal says in chapel "mind your consents" so I asked mine which dress? One consent says "Shame Giovanna selfish pig girl, think how that orfun put her finger to that red silk dress at the sylum the day it was bought and said "pretty pretty" and now with that dress on her she will be happy up to the sky and believe she is an angel." And then another consent will speak "Ungrateful one to give away the so beautiful dress of red whistling silk the first bought you by your darling Bennyfactor Mother that whistles all the times of her! What can it whistle so that orfun of big mouth and little sense?" Now Mother what do I make with those consents? Our letters must go far so it will be done before I get your advice to tell what consent I shall mind.

O if you could visit me that would be my Christmas present of the whole world but you say that cannot happen. I will try and not make too much sadness to myself for that because when I am your daughter every day is Christmas for my thinks of you.

Giovanna.

*Mother of my Christmas heart,—*

There stays just your me tonight in this school of many girls. All the Eggsloosifs belly-lonate Christmas Eve at home except her that



THE PRINCIPAL HAD PUT THE DEEDS WITH MANY FRIENDS FROM ALL

lives far in the geography and she went to Dolly's tree not to notice homesick aches in her soul like she got simptoms.

Dolly foxied me so hard she must got mad on me not to go but I never could for lonesome. Here I have no lonesome but glad instead because you said in your preciousst letter of all that this Eve I could know you were writing to me. Last Christmas I was mixed with many orlans but felt like sollyrude. This Christmas I got such company as nobody ever had that together we write to each other. Last Christmas at the sylum I received a work basket with two spools and thimbel but no surprise for they were all on the maytron's hed when I swept her room and no names just any basket to whatever

orlun. The maytron named me ungrateful to cry but Mother how could Christmas be glad when my surprise was lost?

I used not think so much of Santa Claus as some to treat richness all times better than poorness but I learned off a kid on our doorstep at the tennment that there isn't any. So its no fair to blame a person who never was anybody and I believe a really truly Santa Claus would act like his photogral looks and not forget the stockings of poorness —

The s of poorness has the long tale because is that remiore the maid knocked with a bundle for me. This is my thoughts to open that box. O! O! O! O! O! O! O! To think you put in prettys for me to give to all the names in my



letters. Dolly will jump and dance at the suggestion buckle. Luigi will put a smile on him like anything to see the yellow pipe. O Mother never before in my long life did I give a present to any person. For somebody to look on me with present looks that will be my all new joy with this first Christmas to be your daughter.

In the boxes corner stayed a little package in tissue paper tied with red ribbon. O the teeny gold watch with G on it in pearls and a pearl pin to fasten it on top of my heart! O Mother it never can be me that used to be orfun Giovanna to own that watch! It must be a fairy dream and I will wake up in the waken to say "What a dream I dreamed!" Always your presents talk to me of you or look at me with your looks but this watch speaks most of all not to stop in day or night or get tired. I say to it "Little angel watch she is the Mother of my ——" And that watch so smart ticks back "heart, heart, heart, heart." No other watch could be smart like this of pearly G and teeny golden hands.

O but it makes me feel twice as dreadful about your Christmas present you won't get from me for an awful long time like next summer. If you are thinking this minute I forget your present that is not the true but despair and most wear out my brains that is the true and now what looks like no gift.

I was going to buy you a pretty with the money you sent for a sweater but the Principal said in chapel to take the money of your parents to buy them gifts what love in that? Give them what costs you effort and self denial. And she talked more to say never give debtly presents just because you owe them or hopeful presents to get one back. Dolly raised her hand and asked "What if somebody needs a present which they don't want?" The girls giggled to guess she meant Lizzie. The Principal replied "Decide that yourself with love and tact. Young ladies you are dismissed to your classrooms."

Dolly says love and tact and the Principal and a quarter which fell break up are all on her side to give Lizzie to her Uncle and Aunt at the tree. She made a poem for her parents out of her own poetry but I cannot poet for you Mother because it must fall on one out of the sky or it is no good. A musical girl dedycared her parents many stoffs full of tunes but I could only make you some scales what are notes up-stairs and down-stairs and that would be no present. A very smart girl in lessons was to give her prize if earned which made me worse despair for many girls shorter in their skirts are longer than me in their grades which must put shame on you and the prize for spelling is past

my hope so how could I think to earn a prize except for stupid and faults?

Friday was the last day of this school turn, and the Principal gave out the prizes with many cheers from all and her of smartness earned the one for grammar which was a poetry book. At last the Principal said there was one more prize to decide by vote of all the girls which pupil had got most better in manners by trying hard. O Mother that prize was given to me and not by fair because no other girl here was ever orfun so I had the head start in backness. I was so scared I almost could not hold out my hand and to walk back to my seat I did not know where it stood with the Eggsloosits to clap clap their hands so much. By and by when I opened the package the Principal asked me why I look so disapointed. I answered "It is very beautiful and never did I earn it but what can my Mother make with a Girl's Memory Book of School for a Christmas present?" She explained that if I wrote it full of memories for you Mother it would be a piece of real daughter present same as Dolly's and the musical girl's and her of smartnesses. But it is my grief and woe you will not get it in time for Christmas because I cannot write in it memories that are not to happen yet but must wait till they happen.

I have decided to give away my red silk dress because my Christmas confitent says "Giovanna you got such lots and that orfun so little" O my little darling watch! It now ticks "You got to stop, you got to stop" because the electric will be off in one minute and so good-night Darling Mother from little watch and me, Giovanna.

*Mother of my Merry Christmas Heart,—*

The candles are just blown out on the orfun tree and I took a pink one not much burnt to put in the teeny silver candlestick Dolly gave me so I can write to you after electric is off. I believe this candle likes to burn itself up for that because it waves round its little flame as if to speak "Giovanna remember me to your Mother."

The Eggsloosits all rushed back today quick as possible after their deserts to dress themselves orfun style. Such laughs never were heard in the real kind. Then came the jenuine orfurs and O the looks on them to behold the immitashun orfurs! That orfun which ustomake tell her pumpydour with the maps out of his geography said if she had known she was invited just to other sylum she never woulda come.

The Eggsloosits took each one her orfun to her room and dressed her all sweet and pretty and stylish like a girl of richness with two parents.



"LIZZIE STAY CLOSE TILL UNCLE JOHN SAID, 'WHOSE LITTLE GIRL ARE YOU!'"

One orphan said to her Eggshoosil "I thank you but keep this dress to your own self because you look worse poor than me." And the father of that Eggshoosil is a miser.

Mine which was her of big mouth and little sense all times touched the red silk with her finger and repeated "My red dress, my red dress" like my watch ticks and I was glad to see her love it that hard.

Dolly's Lizzie turned out pretty but so Dolly named her quaint and said that was more dittingey. Lizzie asked "Will my new Mama like me better in this dress?" And Dolly kissed her and pinned a sard on her "Merry Christmas to dear Aunt Winny and Uncle John from Dolly." But Lizzie never saw Dolly wring her hands to me on the quiet to show what scares she got on herself.

Mother when all was finished the orfuns made immitashun Eggshoosils like the Eggshoosils made immitashun orfuns — I guess because the Eggshoosils in dress of poorness acted like fixed grand for a party and the orfuns could not forget so quick their scroocht down feelings even in dress of richness.

Next was the turkey dinner with the orfuns in the chairs and the Eggshoosils to act like maids. All their swallows could work fine and they were very satisfied except Lizzie teased to sit between her Mama and Papa but Dolly told her they were not yet come.

After turkey dinner all went to the big hall of the Christmas tree and there stayed the parents and relatives and whichever. Dolly looked so puffy for her feelings on Lizzie a kind old man thought she was a genuine and tried to

give her a dollar in her hand but she explained no thank you.

The janitor played he was Santa Claus and passed the presents and O the joy and surprise of those affairs most paralyzed them. - I gave none a doll because her sense is younger than she is and it seemed as if she couldn't hug it enough and I was glad.

But poor little Lizzie looked like weeps and said to Dolly "Where is my Mama and Papa like you promised?" My chum led her pretty near to her Uncle and Aunt where they sat and whispered to Lizzie which they were and ran to hide behind the tree. Lizzie stepped close and close till Uncle John said "Whose little girl are you?" and she answered "I am yours, Papa," and the surprise that Uncle had on him was wonderful. Aunt Winnifred spoke "What nonsense! Run to your Mama, child," but she answered "You are my Mama."

Uncle John looked on her card and exclaimed "O that Dolly!" Aunt Winnifred explained to Lizzie how she did not want a little girl and all was mistake.

Lizzie got that kind of disappoint which lasts so bad you don't cry the first minute and they thought she was satisfied but she left herself down on the floor and her grief and woe were dreadfull and she all times talked in her cry

"O my Papa don't want me! O my Mama don't want me!"

Dolly ran to comfort her but she would take no comfort. Aunt Winnifred stood up and spoke "Let us go! this is very painful! Dolly you must be punished!" But Uncle John answered "Why not take her along and look her over? Anyway she said first she was mine." Aunt Winnifred talked back "Just because you sat on that side so she came first to you." So Uncle John carried her but Aunt Winnifred held her hand.

The little candle is most gone and so is my first merry Christmas but I got plenty of merrymen this time to catch up on all I missed before.

O Mother what a long chain you started by your goodness to me. The Eggsloosits tied some more to that chain by this wonderful surprise on the sylum; Aunt Winnifred and Uncle John made another piece to adopt Lizzie. And I never did a thing to make it longer but perhaps I can some day. That is my wish.

I have just one more minute to say Merry Christmas so with that I will stop my letter. Merry Christmas, Mother! Merry Christmas, orphans! Merry Christmas, Eggsloosits! Merry Christmas, all the people in the big world! Merry Christmas, dear God up in heaven!

Giovanna.

